



RAY LAMPHERE, WIDOW GUNNESS' FARM HAND.

Ray Lamphere, under arrest at Laporte, Ind., on suspicion of being concerned in the burning of the farmhouse of Mrs. Belle Gunness and the murder of the Gunness children and their mother, formerly was employed as a farm hand by the Widow Gunness. It is alleged that he made love to her and was repulsed, Mrs. Gunness being on the trail of men with money who were matrimonially inclined. Vengeance and jealousy are alleged as motives for burning the house and destroying the family. Lamphere stoutly asserts his innocence and declares that he "always thought there was something wrong at that place," meaning the Gunness farm. He told the authorities that about two years ago a large man came to the farmhouse who was said by Mrs. Gunness to be a suitor for the hand of her adopted daughter, Jennie Olsen, and that he never knew what became of the man. Miss Olsen's body was one of those found buried on the premises, along with eight others. When caught Lamphere was hiding in a hollow tree.



RUINS OF GUNNESS HOUSE, LAPORTE.

The farmhouse of Mrs. Belle Gunness, a mile from Laporte, Ind., was totally destroyed by fire on the night of April 27. This fire led to the discovery of the nine bodies of murder victims buried on the premises and developed a crime mystery which has horrified the nation. The house was built of brick, with an addition built of lumber. Joseph Maxson, the hired man, slept in a room above the wooden kitchen, and he says that he awoke about 4 o'clock in the morning stifled by smoke which was pouring out of the brick part of the house. He tried to enter that part but could not. Several neighbors who arrived shortly also were driven back by flames. The charred bodies of three children found in the ruins were identified as those of Mrs. Gunness, while the body of a woman, from which the head was missing, either burned off or decapitated prior to the fire, was believed at first to be that of Mrs. Gunness. Subsequent disclosures as to the "murder farm" led some to believe that Mrs. Gunness placed the headless trunk of a murdered woman in the house to serve as a blind in effecting her own escape from justice.



JOSEPH MAXSON, WHO WAS EMPLOYED BY MRS. GUNNESS.

Joseph Maxson, who was employed as man of all work around the house and farm of Mrs. Belle Gunness near Laporte, Ind., pointed out to the authorities certain spots in the yard of the burned farmhouse where, he said, he had been instructed by Mrs. Gunness from time to time to deposit such rubbish as was to be thrown away. The nine bodies of persons supposed to have been murdered by Mrs. Gunness were dug up at points Maxson indicated.



MRS. BELLE GUNNESS, OF LAPORTE'S MURDER FARM.

Mrs. Belle Gunness, the widow suspected of the murder of the persons whose bodies were dug up from the premises of her burned home a mile from Laporte, Ind., was a Norwegian woman whose maiden name was Paulson. She was married first to Max Sorensen, who died under suspicious circumstances. Her second husband, Philip Gunness, died under similar circumstances. It was reported at first that the body of Mrs. Gunness was found with those of her three children in the ruins of her houses. The head of the charred remains of the woman found in the ruins was missing, which fact caused the authorities to suspect that Mrs. Gunness herself had killed her children and set fire to the dwelling after placing in the house the decapitated body of one of her adult women victims in an effort to cause the belief that she had perished in the fire. Mrs. Gunness had had an enormous quantity of gold work done on her teeth. The gruesome mystery of the missing head, it was said by those who held the theory of the flight of Mrs. Gunness, was explained by the woman's fear that she left her substitute's head on the body it would be evident that she herself was not a victim of the fire.



STATE ATTORNEY ROY C. SMITH.



ANDREW HELGELEIN, ONE OF MRS. GUNNESS' VICTIMS.

One of the nine bodies disinterred from the premises of Mrs. Belle Gunness, near Laporte, Ind., was identified as that of Andrew Helgelein, a wealthy stockman of Aberdeen, S. D., forty years of age. He was a Norwegian, as was Mrs. Gunness, who had advertised for a prospective husband with means. Helgelein started for Laporte Jan. 3, since which date nothing was heard from him by his relatives, who were aware that he had gone to the Indiana widow's home with matrimonial intentions. It was known also that he had drawn \$3,000 from his Aberdeen bank account after arriving at Laporte. The theory is that Mrs. Gunness killed Helgelein to get his money.



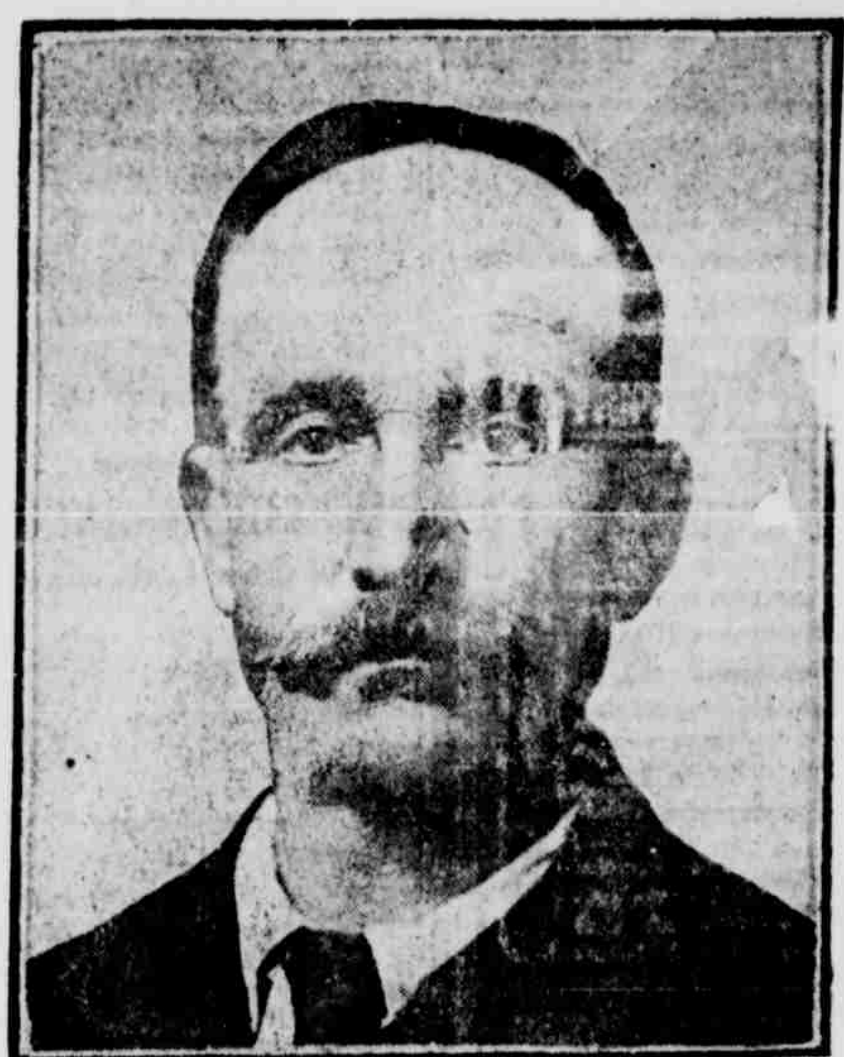
MRS. GUNNESS AND HER THREE CHILDREN.

Mrs. Belle Gunness, the Indiana woman who is believed by the police to have lured to her farm home near Laporte several men on matrimonial pretenses and then murdered them for their money, is said to have been quite fond of her three little children, whose charred bodies were found in the ruins of the Gunness farmhouse, along with the headless trunk of a woman, who was supposed at first to be the body of their mother. The children were Myrtle Sorensen, aged eleven, and Lucy Sorensen, aged nine, daughters of Mrs. Gunness by her first husband, Max Sorensen, and Philip Gunness, aged five, namesake of his father, who, like Sorensen, is said to have died under suspicious circumstances.



DR. C. F. MACK, CORONER, TAKING NOTES.

Shortly after the discovery of the first bodies that had been buried on the premises of the Widow Gunness near Laporte, Ind., Dr. C. F. Mack, the coroner, arrived on the scene and was busy taking notes for official use. The nine bodies of murdered men and women dug up in the yard near the ruins of the burned farmhouse passed under Dr. Mack's close scrutiny, as did also those of the three children and the woman found in the ruins. A jury composed of physicians thoroughly examined the charred remains of the children and the woman and arrived at the conclusion that they were those of Mrs. Belle Gunness and her little ones. It was impossible to determine the sex of five of the bodies disinterred, they having been dismembered and also partially disintegrated by quicklime. Mr. Mack made copious notes for reference in future efforts to solve the horrible mystery and identify the victims, most of whom are believed to have been men who were lured to the place by the matrimonial advertisements of Mrs. Gunness, who described herself as a rich widow wanting a husband with some money.



JOHN HELGELEIN, BROTHER OF ONE OF THE VICTIMS.

Suspicion against Mrs. Belle Gunness was first aroused in Indiana by the arrival at Laporte of John Helgelein, a Norwegian from Mansfield, S. D., who came to investigate the disappearance of his brother, Andrew Helgelein, of Aberdeen, S. D. Andrew Helgelein was known to have answered one of Mrs. Gunness' advertisements for a husband with money. He left Aberdeen on Jan. 3 to visit Mrs. Gunness at her home near Laporte. After his arrival in Laporte he had drawn \$3,000 from his bank in Aberdeen. John Helgelein, becoming worried because nothing further was heard from his brother, wrote to Mrs. Gunness, who replied that Andrew had departed for a visit to Norway. John Helgelein identified one of the first bodies found as that of his brother.